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CONSTITUTION

OF

"THE INDIGENT WIDOWS' AND SINGLE WOMEN'S SOCIETY;"

WITH

RULES FOR THE REGULATION

OF

THE BOARD OF MANAGERS,

AND

FOR THE GOVERNMENT

OF

THE ASYLUM.

PHILADELPHIA:
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AN ACT

TO INCORPORATE

"THE INDIGENT WIDOWS' AND SINGLE WOMEN'S SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA."

WHEREAS, it is represented to the legislature that a number of ladies in the city of Philadelphia have formed an association for the humane and charitable purpose of relieving, assisting, and supporting widows and single women in a state of indigence, and are desirous of being incorporated: Therefore,

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same,* That all such persons of the female sex as now are or hereafter may become subscribers to the Indigent Widows' and Single Women's Society of Philadelphia, in the manner hereinafter provided, be and they are hereby incorporated into a society by the name of "The Indigent Widows' and Single Women's Society of Philadelphia," and by that name shall have perpetual succession, with power to have a common seal, and change the same at pleasure, to make contracts relative to the institution, to sue and be sued, and by that name and style be capable in law of purchasing, taking, holding, and conveying any estate real or personal for the use of said corporation. *Provided,* That the annual income of such estate shall not exceed in value eight thousand dollars, nor be applied to any other purposes than those for which this incorporation is formed. *And also,* to establish by-laws and orders for the regulation of said society, and the preservation and application of the funds thereof. *Provided,* The same be not repugnant to the Constitution and laws of the United States, or of this commonwealth.

SECT. 2. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That every female who shall subscribe and pay to the funds of the society, the sum of three dollars annually, shall by such subscription and payment become a member of said society, liable however to be removed whenever she shall refuse or neglect to pay such annual subscription; and every female who shall subscribe and pay the sum of thirty dollars, shall be a member for life.

Sect. 3. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the society shall meet on the second Thursday of January in every year, at which meeting thirteen members shall be competent to transact business: at this meeting shall be chosen twenty-four Managers, in whom shall be vested the management, direction, and disposal of all the concerns of the society; and if any vacancy shall occur by the death, resignation, removal or otherwise of any manager so chosen, the same may be filled for the remainder of the year by such member of the society as the board of managers for the time being shall appoint; and until the election on the second Thursday in January next ensuing the passage of this act, the persons who were elected at the last annual meeting of said society, shall be the managers.

Sect. 4. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the managers shall meet, upon notice from the officiating secretary of the society, within three days after their election, and shall choose out of their number a first and second directress, a secretary, and a treasurer; that five managers shall be requisite to transact business; that the board of managers may make by-laws for their government, shall make an annual report of their proceedings and of the state of the funds of the society, and give two weeks' previous notice of the meeting of the society.

Sect. 5. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That if the annual election shall not be made on the stated day, the said corporation shall not thereby be dissolved, but the managers and officers shall continue in office until a new election, which shall be made at such time and place, and after such notice, as the board of managers shall prescribe.

Sect. 6. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the lot of ground, and the buildings which may be thereon erected, for the use of the society, shall be free of tax.

REESE HILL,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
ISAAC WEAVER,
Speaker of the Senate.

Approved, March 23d, 1819.
WM. FINDLAY.

RULES FOR THE REGULATION

OF

THE BOARD OF MANAGERS.

1st. The managers shall meet on the first Thursday of every month, at such time and place as they shall appoint.

2d. Five of the managers shall form a quorum for the transaction of all business.

3d. Every meeting shall be opened with reading a portion of Scripture, succeeded by a pause for mental supplication.

4th. No person shall be at liberty to withdraw from the board without permission ; and no conversation, but such as relates to business, shall be allowed.

5th. A fine of twenty-five cents shall be incurred for non-attendance at each meeting, unless satisfactory reasons be given.

6th. All reports of committees shall be in writing.

7th. Business shall commence precisely half an hour after the time appointed for meeting.

8th. Every motion, when made, shall be stated from the chair; when seconded, the directress shall invite discussion upon the subject ; after which, she shall ask if the members are ready for the question ; which being assented to, the votes shall be taken ; first in the affirmative, and next in the negative. No other business shall be taken up by the board, or discussed by any of the members, until that which has thus been laid before them, be decided or postponed.

9th. At the desire of any member of the board, the decision of a new question may be deferred to the meeting succeeding that at which the question was proposed.

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10th. No former resolution shall be reconsidered, unless called for by one of the majority, and shall in all cases be deferred to the next meeting, either special or stated, for decision.

11th. Upon motion made and seconded, the names of the yeas and nays shall be recorded on the minutes.

12th. No person shall decline acting on a committee, unless another member, approved by the first directress, shall be willing to serve in her stead.

13th. The member first named on a committee, shall preside over it, shall give notice of the time and place of meeting, and make the report of their proceedings.

14th. The first directress shall call extra meetings as often as she may think proper, but shall not be obliged to call them contrary to her own judgment, unless five members of the board shall concur in requesting it.

15th. The seal of the society shall not be affixed to any paper, without the vote of the board having been taken on it.

16th. The business of each stated meeting shall commence with the Secretary's reading the minutes of the preceding meeting, the Treasurer's report, and the reports of the committees, which if not presented must be asked for by the Directress. The unfinished business shall then be called up, and any new business brought forward. The weekly committees for the ensuing month shall be named, and the orders on the Treasurer voted.

17th. The board shall not rise until the time and place of the next meeting be distinctly made known.

18th. At the first meeting of the board in January, the standing committees shall be appointed, viz.; the weekly committees of two, for the year, which shall be inserted by the secretary in the minute book of the committee; the purchasing committee; and the committee for receiving applications for admission.

DUTIES OF THE MANAGERS.

The First Directress shall preside at the meetings of the managers, preserve order, appoint committees, call special meetings, and in all equal divisions of the board give the casting vote. She shall furnish every new manager with a book, containing in print, the constitution, the rules for the regulation of the board, the duties of the managers, and the rules for the government of the Asylum. When a manager resigns her seat at the board, she is to return this book to the First Directress, who will make it over to her successor.

In the absence of the First Directress, the Second shall preside; and, if both be absent, a person shall be chosen from among the members present, to preside at the meeting.

The Secretary shall summon the meetings of the managers, keep a fair and correct record of all their proceedings, a register of the inmates of the Asylum, and do all other writing not connected with the office of the Treasurer, or the business of committees.

The Treasurer shall hold the evidences of property belonging to the Society, receive all moneys, and deposit the same at a bank, in her name, as treasurer; make payments agreeably to the orders of the managers, keep a fair account of all receipts and expenditures, which account shall at all times be open to the inspection of the managers. She shall furnish a monthly abstract of her receipts and expenditures, and of the balance remaining in her hands, and prepare a statement to be laid before the Society at their Annual Meeting.

The Managers shall be divided into committees of two, who, in weekly rotation, shall superintend the Asylum, under the name of the "Visiting Committee."

The Visiting Committees shall visit the Asylum not less than three times during their week; they shall endeavour to be present once at each meal, shall make themselves acquainted

with the situation and wants of the inmates, generally direct the concerns of the family, and report their observations in the Minute Book; which book, on the last day of their week, is to be sent to the succeeding committee; for which purpose, a list of the committees is to be kept in the book.

The Purchasing Committee shall make all purchases necessary for the family, pay all bills, and present a monthly account of their proceedings to the board.

The Committee for receiving Applications.—It shall be the duty of this committee to receive applications, to visit the applicants, and inquire into their character and circumstances, and make their report thereon to the board in writing; it shall also be the duty of this committee to keep a register of the names of the applicants, the persons by whom they are recommended, and their place of residence. It will be likewise required, that they keep a book, in which the terms of agreement, entered into between the committee and the friends of the applicants, be inserted, with their signatures annexed. No person will be admitted into the Asylum, without an order from the committee.

Each manager will be furnished, by the Treasurer, with a list of subscribers, whose contributions she will be expected annually to collect.

The duties of the managers appear to be generally comprised in the foregoing rules, in addition to which, it shall be considered the duty of the Visiting Committees at the Asylum, during their stated periods of attendance, not only to inquire into the temporal welfare of its inmates, but to visit them in their several rooms, and endeavour to ascertain their spiritual state, giving them such advice and instruction as may be in their power, and the circumstances of the case may render necessary.

TERMS OF ADMISSION.

1st. No persons shall be admitted into the Asylum, but those who bring satisfactory testimonials to the propriety of their conduct, and the respectability of their character.

2d. When they are pensioners on any benevolent Institution, or Society, it is expected their pensions will be continued, to as-

sist in their support; and that their funeral expenses will be defrayed.

3d. Those who have any property are required to secure the same to the Institution, before they are admitted; in case of their obtaining property after their admission, if they remain in the Asylum it will also be necessary to make it over to this Institution.

4th. It will be required that any one admitted shall pay $30, and come provided with a good bedstead, bed, bedding, and furniture for a room. If they do not bring furniture with them, $50 must be paid on their admission.

5th. Furniture and other articles brought into the Asylum are to remain for the benefit of the Institution.

6th. Persons may be admitted as boarders, but not to the exclusion of such as are entirely dependent.

7th. No person shall be admitted as a boarder, unless satisfactory security be given for the regular payment of her board.

8th. The age of persons admitted into the Asylum, whether as boarders or pensioners, must not be under sixty years.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

FOR THE

GOVERNMENT OF THE ASYLUM.

1st. The Superintendent shall have the entire charge of the house, and keep it in neat order, under the direction of the Managers and Visiting Committee; she is to enforce the rules of the house; to be present at meals, see that they are properly served up, that every thing is on the table before the family sit down; that suitable nourishment is provided for the sick, proper order is observed at table, and Grace said before and after each meal. She must be respectful and kind to every one in the house, and attentive as their circumstances may require; never let partiality be shown in any instance, but maintain the respect due to her station. If improper conduct is observed in any member of the family, she is to inform the Visiting Committee. A list should be made of whatever supplies are necessary, and given to the Purchasing Committee. It is also expected the Superintendent will keep a memorandum of every article that is sent to the house, whether purchases or donations, and by whom sent. She will be expected to go through the house, and see the fires and lights extinguished at nine o'clock, with the exception of one lamp, which is to be left burning all night. A constant fire to be kept in the stove in the Hall, from the 15th of November to the 1st of April.

2d. No person shall be admitted into the Asylum, but those who bring satisfactory testimonials to the propriety of their conduct, and the respectability of their character.

3d. Morning and Evening Prayers to be regularly performed at the Asylum; every inmate will be expected punctually to

attend, except in case of sickness. Notice to be given by ringing the bell.

4th. It will be required of those who are capable, to make their own beds, and sweep their rooms, early every morning; those who are not, will have it done by the Assistant, while they are at breakfast.

5th. It will also be expected, of those who are capable, that they will sew, knit, spin, or render any other service for the benefit of the Institution.

6th. All that is necessary for the comfortable support of the inmates of the Asylum, will be furnished from the funds of the Society; no individual, therefore, will, on any account, be permitted to leave the Institution to solicit assistance, or procure work.

7th. Breakfast to consist of tea and chocolate, or tea and coffee. Dinner at one o'clock.

8th. Supper before candlelight—similar to the breakfast. All who are able, will attend at the general table; those who are more infirm, can take their meals in the sitting room.

9th. If any of the family are indisposed, a suitable meal will be provided, and sent into their rooms.

10th. Washing and Ironing, to be done on Mondays and Tuesdays.

11th. If any inmate of the Asylum feels disposed to visit her friends, she is requested to mention to the Matron where she intends staying, and the probable length of her visit, that no uneasiness may exist on her account; and that, in case of sickness or accident, the Managers may know where she is to be found.

12th. No stimulants or spirituous liquors to be used in the Asylum, except by order of the Physician; and, in that case, to be administered by the Matron.

13th. No person will be permitted to interfere, or find fault with the Superintendent or Assistant; but if any think they have cause for complaint, they must apply to the Managers, who will receive their statement, and take such order thereon as they may think proper.

14th. It is required that all Visiters be treated with respect and attention, and conducted through any part of the building

they may be disposed to visit. Particular attention to be paid to Ministers of the Gospel, and those whose visits are made for religious purposes.

15th. To preserve perfect harmony in the family, the strictest attention must be paid to the Rules of the Asylum. For the first and second violation there will be an admonition; for a third, a complaint will be preferred to the Board; for the fourth, a removal from the house.

THE FORM OF A BEQUEST.

MONEY LEGACY.

"I give and bequeath unto *The Indigent Widows' and Single Women's Society of Philadelphia*, the sum of
to be paid to the Treasurer for the time being, for the use of the said Society."

DEVISE OF REAL ESTATE.

"I give and devise unto *The Indigent Widows' and Single Women's Society of Philadelphia*, [here describe the property or ground rent] together with the appurtenances, in fee simple."

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